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New York

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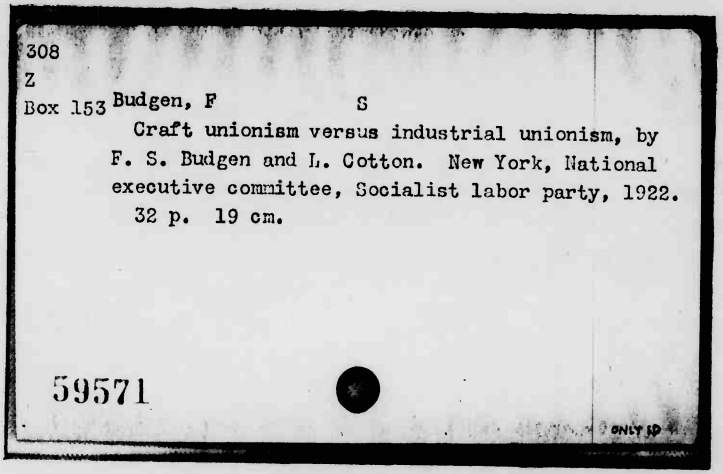
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Craft Unionism

versus

Industrial Unionism

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By

F. S. BUDGEN

and

L. COTTON

Ten Cents

PUBLISHED BY THE
NATIONAL EXECUTIVE COMMITTEE
SOCIALIST LABOR PARTY
NEW YORK

The subject of Industrial Unionism, during a score of years, has not only been widely discussed, but to a great extent has also been lied about and misrepresented. As a consequence, it is greatly misunderstood. A restatement of its aims and objects, as well as of the methods, tactics and principles of its organization, is therefore decidedly timely.

This pamphlet was originally written and issued in England with a view to the conditions and recent developments in the British Isles. In the present edition a few strictly local references have been omitted, having been replaced by others more applicable to events and situations on this side of the ocean. These and other minor changes are made with the consent of the authors.

Of all countries the United States and Great Britain are the most closely related, particularly with regard to political and economic development. The capitalist system, with its machine production, has reached a high state of development in both, making the conditions equally ripe, or nearly so, for a highly advanced revolutionary movement. Industrial Unionism, presenting the ripest intellectual phase of the Socialist Revolutionary Movement, and also the most thorough form of revolutionary organization—an organization containing the nucleus of the future Socialist Industrial Republic—is bound to find its fullest expression in England and America where its pioneer work has been done. With the chaotic state of the Socialist movement in every country, the work of true Industrial Unionism propaganda should be forwarded with the utmost vigor.

This small booklet, though, of course, contributing nothing new to the subject, is so well written, and presents the entire question of unionism in such a clear, logical and forceful manner, that we confidently submit it to the workers as one of the very best of its kind that has been produced since the days of De Leon.

THE PUBLISHERS.

New York, N. Y., July 1922.

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14 Apr '47

Craft Unionism
versus
Industrial Unionism

By

F. S. BUDGEN
and
L. COTTON

PUBLISHED BY THE
NATIONAL EXECUTIVE COMMITTEE
SOCIALIST LABOR PARTY
NEW YORK
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Introductory.

In Great Britain, as in America, the wages of the working class are falling. The purchasing power of the money the worker receives is diminishing, and his portion of the total wealth produced by his labor is constantly growing less. The British working class is surrendering not inches but whole territories of its standard of life. There are, in Great Britain, some six and a half million workers organized in trade unions, yet this numerically imposing body has failed to offer any serious concerted resistance to the attacks upon wages with which are bound up all their most vital interests.

Sixty years of Socialist propaganda have done a great deal towards spreading a general knowledge of Socialist doctrine among the British working class, but we still have the spectacle before us of impotence upon the industrial field and of political discord and confussion.

The present writers lay the blame for this state of affairs at the door of British trade unionism. As Industrial Unionists we have not found it difficult to secure in many quarters a general platonic assent to the theory of Industrial Unionism, but our present object is to try to convince our thinking fellow-workers that the reorganization of Labor's forces into an Industrial

Union is the FIRST STEP towards working class emancipation, and therefore the immediate task confronting the class-conscious worker.

The Beginnings of Industrial Unionism.

A congress of workingmen at Chicago in 1905 founded the Industrial Workers of the World, an organization aiming at the overthrow of the capitalist system and the establishment of Socialist society. That, however, which made this congress a turning point in working-class history was, apart from the sanity and completeness of its general outlook, the particular stress it laid upon the economic organization of labor as an indispensable instrument of revolution. Subsequent working-class history has fully justified the stand they took, and it is to the principles enunciated in Chicago in 1905 that the working class—particularly of the Anglo-Saxon countries—has to turn for leadership.

The form of economic organization advocated by the founders of the I. W. W. was in accord with the productive processes found in advanced capitalist countries, and the important functions claimed for the economic organization were in full agreement with the theory of historic development taught by Scientific Socialism. Thoroughly understanding the political atmosphere of countries where the appeal to reason must precede the appeal to force, they perceived clearly the importance of keeping the working-class movement upon that civilized plane of open and free discussion where it best may gather the needful number of its ad-

herents, and therefore accepted political action in the sense of the peaceful trial of strength at the ballot-box.

To them, as to us, the greatest barriers to working-class emancipation are the erroneous conceptions of the workers as to their position in society, and the false forms of organization resulting therefrom. Give any such error a bodily existence in the form of an organization and that organization will strive to maintain itself even at the expense of the interests it was originally intended to serve. Trade unionism is such a form of organization. Whatever once were the justifications for its existence, they have long since been outlived, and today trade unionism with its rooted traditions, its vested interests, its corrupt leadership, and its appeal to the baser sort of clannishness and vanity in the working class, constitutes the greatest obstacle lying across the path of Labor. There is not a defeat of any section of workers upon the industrial field, but trade unionism has contributed actively or passively towards that defeat; not a political fraud has been practised upon the working class but trade unionism was directly or indirectly responsible for it.

Trade Unionism.

The union of the workers at the "point of production" is a natural and inevitable gesture of defense. In some form or other the union WILL exist. We, Industrial Unionists, do not deny that in times past the trade union has served well as "centre of resistance locally," and although the continued existence of the craft form of organization is a menace to the working-class move-

ment, that craft form can never wholly hide, though it may limit and stifle, the class spirit of the workers. On one occasion, not less glorious because imperfect and premature, trade unionism in Britain, informed with the creative breath of the class struggle, and inspired by the luminous genius of Robert Owen, appeared upon the stage of history with some perception of its revolutionary mission, and on many occasions sections of the workers, as, for example, the miners, in 1921, have honored themselves and their class with examples of fortitude in stubborn defensive fights. The same is true in America. One group after another of workers have fought bravely and with untold sacrifices to retain standards once won. But capitalism has progressed and trade unionism has remained stationary. The economic and political pressure upon the working class becomes daily more intolerable, while at the same time trade unionism shows itself to be less and less efficient as a fighting machine. What ceases to serve the working class obstructs its progress.

Seeing, then, that the union of the workers in the workshop is a weapon of defense which always must and always will be used, we who preach and teach the Social Revolution would be inconsistent and insincere if we neglected to turn the light of Socialist science upon the question of unionism. We are bound to examine in that light such unionism as exists, and to be outspoken and fearless in our criticism if that existing unionism is failing to exercise its functions in the best interests of the working class; and we are bound to investigate in that same light all the possibilities inherent in the organization of the workers according to their useful

occupations, so that we may support our criticism with sound constructive proposals.

We condemn trade unionism, not for the mistakes that it makes—no organization, as no human being, is infallible—but for the mistake that it is.

The two errors which determine the political outlook and the form of trade unionism are (1) acceptance of the wages system and (2) organization in autonomous craft sections. From the intimate combination and interaction of these errors a whole brood of vicious conditions has arisen, which a decade of attempted reform has failed seriously to modify.

Craft autonomy, plus acceptance of the wages system, produced the monstrosity of the job trust, and the job trust turned the arms of the working class against itself. Blind to the essential oneness of the working-class interests, and to the swift retaliation that must follow a violation of this principle, the unions sought to further each its own local advantage by limiting the number of workingmen in the union to the number of available jobs, and thus created and fostered the individual "scab" whom they afterwards denounced.

But the real "scabs" were the organized craft unions themselves. Bands of so-called free labor never amounted to much, and were never so useful to the employing class in the form of strikebreakers as were neighboring unions, stupified and rendered morally obtuse by trade union teaching and organization, or rival unions contending for the same field.

Modern industry groups together in many cases hundreds of different craftsmen in the production of one object. The capitalist buys their labor-power out

of one money-bag, indifferent as to its special application, and science combines the productive activities of many kinds of labor towards one end. That same multiplication of power, which arises out of the efforts of many, co-operating upon the field of industry, should apply also to the class struggle. Industrial technique is impersonal and impartial, and does not deny to the worker that which it gives to the capitalist. What it has done for the capitalist, in increasing the mass of his surplus value through multiplying the productivity of labor, it might also do for Labor itself by increasing the mass and mobility of Labor's defensive and offensive powers. But trade unionism weights the scales against Labor beforehand by splitting up into so many craft sections those workers which science had united for productive purposes. Accordingly, the employer has it both ways. He has his workers admirably organized to work for him, and admirably disorganized to fight him. The recent protracted strike of the ships' joiners in the shipbuilding industry will serve as an example to remind us that this is part of the current and daily practice of trade unionism, and not a description of trade union methods in the bad old days before federations and alliances were heard of. In America the history of defeats, because of the craft spirit of the strike, is nearly endless. The recent switchmen's strike, strikes of conductors and motormen in any number of cities, may merely be called to mind as illustrations of struggles that have gone down in defeat, with a large portion of organized workers in the industry on strike remaining at work and aiding to down the strikers.

The spirit of slavish resignation, born of the belief

that capitalist conditions are permanent, and strengthened by experience of working-class impotence under trade union organization, promoted the tendency to transform the unions into sick and death benefit associations, and thus still further to cripple them as fighting organizations.

The trade union leaders have been, and are, often corrupt, often treacherous, and in general dominated by capitalist thought, serving capitalist rather than working-class interests. Their belief in the permanence of capitalist economic and political conditions makes them naturally anxious to secure as good a position for themselves as may be had in capitalist society. Then the multiplication of trade union sections, and therefore of trade union officials, induces a competition among them as to which one of them best can serve the interests of the discerning and place-granting capitalist class, and thus outdistance his fellows in the race for capitalist favor. It should not be forgotten, however, that their bourgeois pretensions and reactionary activities are the authentic outcome of trade union philosophy and organization.

It is true that the law of value dominating the capitalist system tends in the direction of a decline in wages, but we deny trade unionism the right to plead the inevitability of this economic tendency as excuse for its failure to preserve intact a standard of life for the wage-earners.

The primary functions of unionism are defensive, but trade unionism has abandoned the defensive struggle, and, through the mere fact of its existence, has negatived any improvised resistance to capitalist aggres-

sion which might have sprung from the natural, instinctive solidarity of the workers themselves. Trade-unionism has not alone failed to act as a brake upon the decline of wages, but has acted as a brake upon the natural resistance to such a decline.

As matters stand, the trade unions are becoming a fixed part of the steadying and regulating machinery of capitalist society in the efforts the capitalists are making to consolidate their exploitation on the basis of industrial serfdom. Through the trade union leaders their function is to determine the precise degree of exploitation the working class is prepared, at any given moment, to endure, to concur in fixing that degree of exploitation for a given period, and to guarantee security for the capitalist exploiter against any spasmodic effort of resistance on the part of the wage slave.

The Wage War of 1921 and the Triple Alliance Fiasco.

The wage reductions of 1921 deserve special mention, both on account of their importance and their instructiveness. Typical of modern capitalist development were the preparations for the attack, and the long front upon which the attack was delivered.

The productivity of labor, always on the increase under capitalism, received a new impetus from the concentrations and economies effected during the war. British capitalism, however, at the close of hostilities, found itself faced with certain markets vanquished out of existence and others threatened by the cheap pro-

duction of the vanquished nations; for the capitalist knows that no military stranglehold can permanently resist the counter pressure of cheap commodities. The wages, then, of the British worker had to be reduced to enable the British commodity to confront that of other nations on the world market, equal in cheapness and yet charged with the indispensable minimum of surplus value. Hence the intensified production stunt of the two years immediately following the armistice, with the consequent overproduction resulting in the creation of a sufficiently numerous army of unemployed.

It was here that British capital, with characteristic cynicism, enlisted the services of a great number of trade union leaders to preach "More production!" to the British working class. The convincing countenances of these "labor lieutenants" of the capitalist class, with appropriate quotations from their public exhortations to the wage slaves to enter the "gate to more," stared at us from street billboards and railway station platforms. And in their own persons, accompanied by distinguished representatives of big capital, they appeared at public meetings to repeat their capitalist sophistries with a loud voice. In the capitalist press they were not slow to point the same moral and adorn the same old tale at so much per line.

All markets, including the employment bureaus, being full to overflowing with unsaleable commodities, the attack on wages began. The whole of capitalist society, anticipating possible trouble and prepared to meet it, stood together in one solid phalanx. Federations of employers, representing all forms of capital, together with all shades of capitalist thought, as mani-

fested in the capitalist political parties and their kept newspapers, subordinated their local differences to their general interest in exploitation and to their hostility towards Labor. As always hitherto, the State, with the whole of its despotic powers and coercive forces—prisons, bludgeons, rifles, machine guns, and amateur and professional strikebreakers—stood at the disposal of the capitalist class.

In response to the imperative demand of the working-class interests, a system of defensive alliances had been entered into between the principal unions, which had seemed to guarantee unity of action, in advance, for a sufficient nucleus around which the rest of the British working class might rally. That was the Triple Alliance. But in spite of these preparations, the result was an overwhelming victory for the capitalist attack. Craft unionism was not to be denied. The Triple Alliance colossus crumpled and collapsed with the mere attempt to stand upon its feet of clay. In 1921, as hitherto, the working class was split up into sections, then beaten and brought to surrender.

The Triple Alliance fiasco demonstrates that organization along the lines of craft autonomy, with its traditional sectionalism and capitalist outlook, precludes the possibility of the working class acting as one, however imperatively its class interests call for such unity of action. No system of alliances can cover the need for real unity of organization. In its nature an alliance is only a limited and temporary surrender of complete independence by otherwise sovereign bodies, and that claim for complete independence made by the craft is in itself fatal to the class. The working class is one

body, as an army is one body. And in the case of an army we do not see regiment support regiment on the field of battle by a system of alliances between independent groups; but, instead, battalion, brigade, battery and corps are functional and organic divisions, designed to facilitate the use of arms, and increase the efficiency of the army as a whole. Alliances are always weakest at their seams, whence it follows that the greater the number of trade unions allied the more numerous will be the weak places in their line of battle—the greater will be the number of separate interests militating against the interest of the whole.

Intrigue and treachery of the trade union leaders characterize "Black Friday," but they do not explain it. The organizational weakness of trade unionism, its political cowardice and its timid and treacherous leadership, are all of one piece. By the masses it wields, and the political atmosphere it can create by setting them in motion, trade unionism is potentially capable of challenging capitalist rule in the workshops and the State, but is entirely incapable of backing up that challenge with any effective action. All their class instincts awakened by the approach of such a situation, the capitalists entrench themselves behind their ownership of the tools and their possession of State power; and trade unionism, having totally unfitted the working class to assume control of the productive machinery, and having rendered them morally and physically incapable of facing the power of the State, has only the choice between a forlorn hope or surrender at discretion. In their own interests the trade union leaders prefer the later course, and are prepared to strain a point to insure

its being adopted. If only the leaders are responsible for "Black Friday," then "sack the lot" would be the sound and sufficient sequel thereto, but we maintain that trade unionism, no matter what changes in leadership it might undergo, must always act, in like circumstances, in substantially the same manner. The only sane and virile policy for the working class to adopt, based upon the necessities of our age, and with the experience of 1921 before us, is to undertake the reorganization of its forces upon the industrial field.

In America a similar onslaught on organized labor has taken place since the close of the War, indicating that the capitalists in many of the gigantic industries are commencing to look upon their "labor lieutenants" as a rather unnecessary nuisance. In the name of individual "freedom of contract," the "open shop"—which is only an euphonious term for non-union shop—agitation has been carried on with vigor. In one large industry after another the workers have been attacked and defeated —suffice it to mention the steel industry, the shipping industry, the textile industry, the mining industry. The attack on craft unionism in this country was not so spectacular as the struggle and defeat of the Triple Alliance in England, but, as it is more insidious, it will in the end be equally, if not more, effective.

The Working-Class Movement and the Functions Of Its Political Organization.

What form this reorganization must take will be dictated jointly by (1) our conception of the Labor Movement generally—in particular of the mission and

function of unionism—and (2) the nature of the capitalist system of production.

The Labor Movement is in its essence a revolutionary movement, however much its expressions may, from time to time, be falsified by capitalist intrigue and limited by its own immaturity. Its object can only be attained by the complete transformation of the existing mode of production for profit into Socialist production for use, and by the demolition of all political forms pertaining to capitalism. In resisting capitalist exploitation in its own interests, the working class defends the interests of the human race and of human culture generally; in restoring to society its instruments of labor—thus abolishing class rule and that organ of class rule, the State—the working class fulfils and ends that cycle of human development which began with the decay of primitive communism in blood-related groups.

One and indivisible as regards its revolutionary aim, in its form the working-class movement is of two-fold character—political and economic; and if this two-fold character is stamped upon it by the nature of the class struggle in capitalist society, its consequences project, nevertheless, over the temporal limits of capitalism, and determine the structure of Socialist society.

The struggle for power within the capitalist State produces the political organization of Labor, dictating its form and functions, and limiting its field of operation.

Government in Socialist society, as defined by the great thinkers of the Socialist movement, will be an administration of things, not a government of men. The political movement of Labor, therefore, can never con-

tain nor produce the constructive elements of such a society, seeing that it is an arm forged for conflict with the capitalist class upon the ground of the territorially constructed and man-governing State.

The practice of modern political democracy gives rise to the illusion that the State, with all its machinery of oppression, will automatically and inevitably fall a prize to the Labor Movement when the latter can muster a majority of votes. Out of this illusion spring the parliamentary cretinism and political compromise of bogus labor parties, with their make-up of trade union leaders and petty bourgeois ideologists. Neither logic nor history is on the side of those simple souls who imagine that one organ of the British Parliament, the House of Commons, is, or can be raised to be, an instrument for the legal emancipation of the wage slaves. In America the Socialist party has built up its entire machine on this illusion, resulting, consequently, in "a machine for lying about Socialism," its agitation, beginning and ending with the idea of catching votes for the sole purpose of capturing political office, substituting the capitalist politicians with "socialist" politicians, with the notion of ultimately running a "socialist" commonwealth through the Political State machinery,—municipal, state, or federal.*

Capitalism in the ascendant, secured for itself a share in the government of the country, sufficient for its untrammelled development; capitalism, long since dom-

*"It [society] can neither *clear by bold leaps,* nor *remove by legal enactments,* the obstacles offered by the successive phases of its normal development. But it can shorten and lessen the birth-pangs."—*Karl Marx.*

inant and conservative, has monopolized the whole of the executive powers of the State.

Side by side with the concentration of capital has proceeded the concentration of political power in the hands of the capitalists. The House of Commons, which was the instrument through which the bourgeoisie achieved political supremacy, is powerless as an instrument for working-class emancipation. It is neither the seat of State authority nor has it any powers which lend themselves for the task of social transformation. Gradually and silently, and in the same tempo at which the capitalist class absorbed the whole of the powers attaching to the prerogative of the Crown, the House of Commons has surrendered its authority to the Executive, which now, working in close contact with capitalist economic combinations, constitutes one of the most despotic Governments in the world. Great Britain is ruled by a capitalist oligarchy in the form of the King's Ministers and the heads of the State Departments. In other words, Great Britain is ruled by the Executive Committee of the capitalist class, functioning as Sub-Committee of the King's Privy Council, and masquerading as the elected representation of the people. A majority of working-class votes, unsupported by adequate force, and not prepared to compromise with capitalism, would break against this bulwark of class rule, harmless as rain.

The constitutional republic of the United States has in these respects followed closely in the steps of the parent constitutional monarchy of England, the power of the President and his Cabinet being all the greater because the Cabinet in this country is not "responsible,"

hence it remains unaffected by political winds. How entirely the President and his Cabinet constitute a committee of capitalism, ruling regardless of Congress and Constitution, if capitalist interests dictate these be overruled, was demonstrated during 1918-19. The Constitution says that only Congress can declare war, but during these years, despite Congress and Constitution, the President and his "advisers" carried on war with Russia.

It is true that the governing organs of capitalism are by their nature unfitted to serve as means for the construction of Socialist society; yet not less true is it that the vote is of incalculable service to the working class. The practice of reasoning and of counting noses, before proceeding to the use of force, is an expedient of civilization (not of capitalism) for avoiding continual and society-destroying strife, and the working class, claiming to be the standard-bearer of civilization against capitalist barbarism, can only neglect the use of the vote at its peril. Not by a handful of men and women, however resolute and devoted, is capitalism to be overthrown, but by the enlightened and organized masses of the toilers; and the vote provides a means through which the working-class movement may educate and marshal the necessary number of its adherents —marshalling the forces against the State—the robberburg of capitalism—for the purpose of destroying it.

The dominant function of a political party of Labor, in a country where the State is cast in the mold of political democracy, is to enlighten the workers as to their position in society, and mobilize them to obtain a majority at the ballot-box for the proletarian revolu-

tion. Not that majority is it that constitutes the revolution, nor can those bodies to which revolutionary proletarian representatives are elected become instruments of revolutionary transformation. The creative force of the workers' political movement lies alone in that state of mind which believes in right and reason and in the fulfilment of historic law. Its hands are empty of arms, but its acceptance of the tempo of revolutionary development, as historically given, makes possible the gathering of sufficient revolutionary numbers, without which no appeal to force can succeed. In itself not constructive, it permits and promotes the growth of revolutionary constructive agencies; peaceful in its posture, it is yet the most valuable of all agencies for the recruiting of Labor's army of conquest and occupation. And it holds and uses for the proletarian revolution the broad plateau of free discussion, with its corollary the ballot, abandonment of which position would force the revolutionary Labor Movement to struggle upon the treacherous slopes and in the dark ravines of conspiracy, where no mass deployment of its forces is possible.

The Functions of the Economic Organization— Industrial Unionism.

That army of conquest and occupation of the working class is the working class itself, integrally organized on the industrial field. A majority of votes, which, unsupported by adequate force, expressing only the will and the right of the workers, would break harmlessly against the bulwark of State authority, becomes a to-

tally different event when it is the issue of a working class organized industrially and armed with the might given by effective control of the nation's productive machinery. An army of conquest, providing the working class with a mighty non-military engine of physical force, the Industrial Union constitutes, at the same time, and no less, the working-class army of occupation, endowing Socialist society with the breath of life, and with organs and institutions appropriate to its existence. For the working-class revolution consists in restoring to society its instruments of labor, and in reorganizing the social structure upon the basis of the industrial constituency. All the rest is a means to this end.

To become supreme in the State, the working class needs the integral industrial organization of its overwhelming numbers, able to CONTROL production. Effective organization on the industrial field is a form of physical force always at the disposal of the proletariat in countries where the capitalist system obtains, but in a quite special measure at the disposal of the working class in countries which, like Great Britain and America, have attained the highest degree of capitalist development — where the proletariat constitutes the great majority of the nation, and is brigaded productively for the mass production of commodities—and where, consequently, effective organization of the working class on the industrial field places the economic life of the nation in the hands of the working class. It is not alone, however, the high degree of development attained by capitalism in Great Britain and in the United States that indicates this important function of the workers' economic organization in this country. This

function is emphasized and given still further relief by the character of British and American military organization, which relies for its effectiveness upon a body of professional soldiers, segregated as far as possible from the rest of the population, and which denies to the mass of the people a knowledge of the use of arms.

To justify and maintain its supremacy, the working class needs equally the integral industrial organization of its overwhelming numbers, able to CONTINUE production. Modern society, as found today in Great Britain and the United States, pays for its productive efficiency with a high degree of vulnerability. That productive efficiency could only be lost at the greatest peril to the working class itself, and to society as a whole. It is unthinkable that a gulf of chaos could be allowed to intervene between capitalist production, based upon wage-slavery, and Socialist production of wealth in a classless society. Nothing but the integral industrial organization of the working class can bridge such a gulf and insure the orderly continuance of wealth production, even during the stress of probable civil strife, and against the active and passive sabotage of the dispossessed capitalists.

By the same revolutionary act through which the working class frees itself from servitude to the present lords of industry, it liberates also all productive forces from capitalist national limitations and capitalist anarchy of production for sale. It breaks down the ruinous and absurd barriers of national competition for markets, and its does away with the cruel and destructive institution of the world market as regulator of production. But where the working class destroys, there also

it creates. In cleansing the world's house of the capitalist demons—greed, anarchy, and force—it invites in their place the benign spirits of reason, order, and co-operation, and, in the form of an Industrial Union of the World's Workers, supplies these with a body through which humanity may receive the blessings of these benign influences. It is the function of the Industrial Union to be the regulator of the world's wealth production, when the world market shall have been abolished and national competition replaced by international co-operation.

Inevitably the heroic struggles of the Russian workers and peasants, and that concentration of political power in the form of a dictatorship found necessary by them, have raised the question whether a working-class revolution in countries like England and America would find the same machinery of government equally necessary. We do not pretend to be able to answer this question, but beyond a doubt the dictatorship arises out of the necessities of a particular situation, and not out of the application of a doctrine. If we are right in our belief that only the Industrial Union is capable of accomplishing the revolution—of TAKING the land and the tools—then any governmental machinery needed to HOLD that conquest would logically derive its authority from and be exercised at the discretion of the industrially organized working class.

The Structure of the Industrial Union.

Inseparable from the functions of unionism is its structure. Issue of capitalist society and of capitalist development as the Socialist Republic must be, the or-

gan through which it is brought into being, Socialist Unionism, must take its form from the existing, fully developed capitalist method of production.

The line traced between the capitalist class and the working class, separating these into two hostile bodies, indicates the first structural principle of revolutionary Industrial Unionism. In other words, the social fact of the class struggle makes the attainment of class solidarity at once the ideal and the imperative necessity of the working class—and this neither more nor less, but in equal measure when it faces the capitalist class in control of industry, and when it confronts that same class in control of the governing machinery of the nation. The working class is one, and all local, technical or temporary interests must be subordinated to the paramount interest of its oneness. It is not the specialized nature of the work they perform in industry that creates value, nor is it their individual employer alone who profits therefrom. Capital, as an independent social force, levels all the different kinds of labor to surplus value creating labor, and of this the whole capitalist class is beneficiary. Striking or locked-out workers find themselves opposed not only by the individual employers, but by the capitalist class in the guise of Manufacturers' and Merchants' Associations, Chambers of Commerce, etc., wherein the capitalists subordinate all their internal rivalries to the pursuit of their interests as a class of exploiters. And parallel to the formation of such federations of employers, the concentration of capital proceeds uninterruptedly. Craft unionism is made to look like a prehistoric survival—something ludicrous if it were not so tragic—seen in the

light of such vast capital aggregations as those of Beardmore Vickers in Britain, or Stinnes in Germany, or the Standard Oil Company in the United States—concerns which occupy themselves with almost every conceivable branch of production, and draw through a thousand channels surplus value from its one source and fountain head, the labor of the workingman. Not as craftsmen are we exploited, but as workers, and therefore in the first place it is as workers that we should unite. The oneness of the working class—the acceptance of the class struggle in all its implications—is the fundamental principle of Industrial Unionism, both in its form and in its action.

In every higher living organism there is a subdivision of parts, corresponding to different functions, and these parts do not divide the organism against itself, but subserve the ends of its existence and further its well-being. The working class is a living organism, but an organism with differentiation of parts, corresponding to a high degree of development. Out of the class struggle and the development of the tools of production the working class has arisen, but if the one compels its unity, the other compels differentiation within that unity.

Near to our purpose is the parallel of an army, the essential oneness of which is not contradicted, but affirmed, by its groupings into battalion, battery, flying squadron, etc. The evolution of the art of warfare under the influence of science applied to the technique of the armorer, has made such groupings necessary for military efficiency; nevertheless, now, as always hitherto, an army ceases to exist, is defeated, when its unity

is destroyed, when its parts no longer cohere. No unity is possible in an army except upon the basis of such a subdivision of parts and functions as is dictated by the weapons used at a given time; and similarly no attempt to organize the working class into one union can be successful except it be upon the lines dictated by the present facts of production. Any attempt to organize the working class promiscuously—without regard being had to the productive activity of each worker—would be as absurd as the attempt to organize an army of mixed groups of artillerymen, riflemen, sappers, etc., and would end as disastrously for the morale and efficiency of both.

If the class struggle, with its primary affirmation of proletarian solidarity, is the first principle of Industrial Unionism; the second, complementary principle—determining the form of the union—is supplied by the growth of capitalist production from handicraft, through manufacture, to industry. As its name implies, Industrial Unionism places itself upon the plane of development arrived at by capitalist production today.

The first fact in production, which determines the place of each worker within the Industrial Union, is THE NATURE OF THE PRODUCT to which his labor contributes. Thus, if a hundred or any number of different occupations, however diverse, go towards the production of any kind of output, the whole of them are grouped together, locally and nationally, around that output. The building of a ship, for example, demands the co-ordinated labor of many different kinds of workers, in the greatest variety of material—workers in all

kinds of woods and metals, electricians for the installation of every kind of electric appliance and for the production of light and power for the yard, draughtsmen, clerks, transport workers, and laborers. Trade unionism divides all these against each other, undermines their defensive power, and denies all the revolutionary possibilities of economic organization; but Industrial Unionism gives a working-class form to this fact of production, by organizing locally, nationally, and internationally, all workers around the product of their labor. And mindful of the fact that all human labor of all kinds subserves the same end of satisfying the needs of the human race (just as each instrument in an orchestra, under the guidance of the conductor, subserves the end of a total harmony), Industrial Unionism unites all industries in a Central Executive Board, capable of directing the total productive forces of Labor, either as an engine of class warfare or as a wealth-producing instrument.

The same promiscuity of occupations which would be disastrous in the case of the working class as a whole, would be as fruitful of confusion if practised locally within the industrial plant, where many different kinds of labor co-operate to produce a given output. Here enters a second fact of production to determine the structure and maintain the order of the local organization of the Industrial Union, and that fact is the particular occupation upon which each worker is engaged, denoted by the PARTICULAR TOOLS he uses. The local Industrial Union is called into being and given its form by the fact of output, but the component parts of that local organization are the shop or trade branches,

formed of workers contributing to that output by the exercise of the same occupation—by the use of the identical tools.

The Activities of Working-Class Political Parties Determined by Their Attitude towards Unionism.

The Industrial Union will receive its ultimate form from the creative intelligence of the working class, operating upon the material placed before it by the history of man as a tool-using animal. Such indication of its form, as has been briefly given, bases itself upon the working-class experience already historic.

What we desire to emphasize for the benefit of our thinking and politically organized fellow-workers is that unionism is still the burning question of the day, and that the triumph of the working-class movement depends upon that question being correctly answered. If, for any reason, we suppress the question, or give an evasive answer, the question itself will swiftly punish us for our shortsightedness and timidity; for our attitude towards unionism will determine the whole character of our political teaching, and will influence our judgment and sense of perspective in accordance with its sanity and thoroughness.

The acceptance of trade unionism involves the denial of all revolutionary functions of unionism, and this must, and does, lead to the overweighting of our political movement with tasks it is incapable of performing —under the burden of which, if they were sincerely attempted, that political movement must become top-heavy and founder; and having assumed functions

which do not lie within its province, its own proper activities will, as a matter of course, suffer from neglect. What happens, for example, if a political party of Labor proclaims the necessity of a sufficient physical force to back up its demand for the surrender of the land and the tools, and, out of consideration for trade union numbers and authority, denies the function of unionism as supplier of that force? To fill up the gap, that party is obliged to resort to the alternative of armed insurrection—is obliged in the twentieth century, and in highly-developed and capitalist America and Great Britain, to fall back upon the revolutionary methods and ideology of 1789 and 1848, and this in spite of the fact that the evolution of the art of warfare has made the improvisation of armies so difficult as to be practically impossible. Denying revolutionary unionism as the truly proletarian form of physical force, such a political party is driven also to deny revolutionary unionism in its Socialist constructive aspect. And thus, the Revolutionary Movement of Labor, in addition to saddling itself with the task of improvising a military force, is obliged also to contemplate the improvisation of an economic machinery for carrying on the productive life of the nation, under the shield of a military dictatorship instituted and wielded by itself. The armed insurrection, and the raising of the dictatorship of the proletariat to a dogma, are counsels of despair, arising out of the reactionary character and weakness of trade unionism. The working-class revolution and trade unionism are incompatible, and the political party attempting to reconcile them, pinning its faith to the possibilities opened up by the disintegration

and collapse of the capitalist system, reckons without its host. Never would the existence of a sufficient body of industrially organized workers be more necessary than on the eve of the collapse of capitalism, and no greater misfortune could befall the working class than to meet that situation with the inert mass of trade unionism lying between chaos and Socialist reconstruction.

So much for the toleration, or qualified approval, of trade unionism or the neglect of the problem of unionism altogether, impatient of its magnitude. In another category stands a political party of labor, designing to revolutionize society through the sole instrumentality of Parliament or Congress, and consequently assigning to the working class as a whole no other function than that of serving as voting cattle. This party will regard the resignation and moral stupefaction of the workers under trade union defeatist leadership as a positive blessing, seeing that such a condition of affairs is likely to yield a rich harvest of docile and inactive votes. In the ballot it sees, not an instrument for the massing and educating of revolutionary numbers, but an alchemy able to transmute industrial defeat into political victory. Should such a party, representing parliamentary cretinism in its completest development, one day be victorious at the polls, only three possibilities are open to it. It may give the capitalist class notice to quit (a course which revolutionary Industrial Unionism alone makes possible), or it may ignominiously resign, or it may accept what is known as "office," in which case it takes over, not the mild task of instituting Socialist society, but the bloody business of government, forced upon it by the logic of the still

existing class struggle, and by the logic of its tenancy of the governing machinery. The exploits of Noske and Scheidemann in Germany are before us as an example of labor government in capitalist society.

Conclusion.

The working-class movement is one which, for its consummation, demands the adhesion of the overwhelming mass of the enslaved and exploited people. Herein agree all teachers and leaders of that movement, from Marx to Lenin; and the Industrial Unionist, in particularizing, insists only that those masses shall be enlightened and politically and industrially organized. Our struggle is a class struggle, and as such it takes its place in that series of class struggles through which society has developed since the decay of primitive communism; but inasmuch as social evolution has imposed upon the working class, as condition of its own emancipation, abolition of class society, there the similarity ends and the difference begins.

From this particular condition of the proletarian struggle it follows that the seizure of governing power alone—which was sufficient for the bourgeoisie when it broke the brittle absolutism of the renaissance monarchs and claimed, as the ruling class, its political heritage—is insufficient for the propertyless slaves of imperialist capitalist society. The whole of the struggles in which the modern proletariat has been involved, whether fighting under its own banner or under that of the bourgeoisie, are so many lessons on the text, that for the fulfilment of its own distinct and specially proletarian mission, its own proletarian organs of combat

and construction are indispensable. The experience of the Paris Commune showed that the working class could not take over and use for its own purposes the ready-made machinery of bourgeois government, and in our own time the Workers' and Peasants' Republic of Russia, has been laboring, from the day of its inauguration, upon the forging of durable instruments of Socialist administration.

That which in our opinion is alone capable of giving authentic form and substance to the revolutionary proletarian will is the integrally industrially organized working class itself. The mass and weight of the Industrial Union will make possible the enduring political triumph of the working class; its effective control of the nation's productive machinery will make possible the transition from the political class-rule State to the classless Socialist society.

It is not pious loyalty to earlier associations that induces us at this juncture to restate, as nearly as might be in its original completeness, the idea of Industrial Unionism, but in the first place the conviction that revolutionary Industrial Unionism is the solution to the present deadlock in the labor movement as well as the key to the final emancipation of the working class, and secondly the fact that Industrial Unionism has been so often falsified and misinterpreted that consequently it is misunderstood. Trade unionism must inevitably break down and break up under the pressure of intensified class conflict, and the duty of every revolutionist, convinced of the necessity for class-conscious economic organization, is to spread the gospel of Industrial Unionism and at the same time to watch for the at-

tempt, equally inevitable, of the bourgeois labor leader to retain his hold upon the working-class movement in some new form—probably in the form of a more or less plausible caricature of Industrial Unionism, carefully guarding against its revolutionary aim.

In such measure as we have been able to demonstrate the necessity for Industrial Unionism as a means to the emancipation of the working class, we must have answered in advance all objections on the score of its practicability. For those same forces which brought into being the modern working class, and which have compelled that class, in its struggles with its oppressors, to "scorn with cruel thoroughness all half-measures," are still operative and inexhaustible.

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